

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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SUBJECT: REACTION TO DANISH ELECTION

SUMMARY: SWEDISH REACTION IS SHARPLY PESSIMISTIC OVER OUTCOME OF DANISH ELECTION. ALTHOUGH THERE IS SOME WORRY THAT SAME PHENOMENA OF VOTER DISCONTENT COULD OCCUR HERE, IN GENERAL SWEDES BELIEVE THEY ARE TOO RESPONSIBLE TO GET INTO SUCH A PREDICAMENT. SPECULATION ON POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS MOSTLY FAVORS SOME KIND OF BROAD COALITION, WITH A NEW ELECTION WHEN VOTERS CALM DOWN. END SUMMARY.

1. SWEDES HAVE FOLLOWED DANISH ELECTION WITH INTENSE INTEREST. GENERAL REACTION WAS SUMMED UP BY ONE NEWS-PAPER "THERE IS SOMETHING ROTTEN IN THE STATE OF DENMARK." MEDIA AND POLITICIANS HERE VIEW ELECTION AS DISASTER FOR DENMARK. IT REVEALS THAT DANISH DEMOCRACY IS IN DEEP TROUBLE AND THAT THE DANISH VOTERS ARE SO TIRED OF ESTABLISHED PATTERNS AND OLD FORMS THAT THEY ARE READY TO TRY ANY ALTERNATIVE, HOWEVER OUTLANDISH--EVEN GLISTRUP.

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2. PRIME MINISTER PALME OBSERVED THAT NEW DANISH PARTIES

HAD SKILLFULLY EXPLOITED ECONOMIC DISCONTENTS AND PARTICULARLY THE EC POLICY OF THE DANISH GOVERNMENT. HE SEES DARK DAYS AHEAD FOR DENMARK.

3. ELECTION HAS EVOKED CONSIDERABLE PONDERING ABOUT ITS POSSIBLE EFFECTS ON SWEDISH POLITICS. CENTER PARTY (AND PRINCIPAL OPPOSITION) LEADER THORBJORN FALLDIN OPINED THAT ELECTION SHOWED HOW ESTABLISHED PARTIES COULD GET TOO FAR AWAY FROM THE GRASS ROOTS. HE SAID, "WE MUST MAKE IT CLEAR THAT WE REALLY CARE ABOUT THE OPINIONS OF THE CITIZENS, TO KEEP US FROM SHARING THE DANISH DILEMMA SOONER OR LATER." LIBERAL LEADER GUNNAR HELEN AGREED WITH FALLDIN, AND SAID FURTHER THAT MANY VOTERS, WHO ARE ALSO DISCONTENTED, ARE STILL OPEN TO REASON. "THIS IS THE GRIM AND YET HEALTHY LESSON TO BE DRAWN FROM THE DANISH ELECTION," HELEN SAID. HE ADVISED SWEDISH PARTIES TO GET OUT TO THE LOCAL LEVEL, TO RECOGNIZE IMPORTANCE OF VOLUNTARY ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS BOROUGH AND TOWN COUNCILS, AND SAID HE FAVORED HOLDING LOCAL REFERENDUMS AND OPEN GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE HEARINGS, AMERICAN STYLE.

4. MODERATE LEADER BOHMAN SAW ELECTION AS SPONTANEOUS EXPRESSION OF NEGATIVE FEELING--DANES WERE VOTING AGAINST, NOT FOR.

5. ALTHOUGH DISTURBED BY ELECTION, MOST SWEDES DOUBT PHENOMENON COULD SPILL OVER THE BORDER IN ANY IMPORTANT DIMENSION. COMPALCENT THEORY IS THAT DANES ARE ECCENTRICS IN POLITICAL MATTERS WHILE SWEDES ARE TOO RESPONSIBLE TO ACTUALLY VOTE FOR SOMEONE LIKE GILSTRUP--EVEN IN PROTEST.

6. SWEDISH MEDIA REFLECT GENERAL CONFUSION IN THEIR SPECULATION ON POSSIBLE GOVERNMENT ALTERNATIVES IN DENMARK. DAGENS NYHETER'S CHIEF EDITOR SVEN ERIK LARSSON IN CALLING FOR A "BROAD SOLUTION" SAID THE GOAL FOR SUCH BROAD COOPERATION WOULD BE TO REDUCE REASON FOR DISCONTENT AMONG THE VOTERS. "BROAD AGREEMENTS ARE NEEDED, BUT NOTHING IS EASIER THAN BLOCKING SUCH COOPERATION. BUT WILL THIS BE AN OPPORTUNE THING TO DO FOR ANY OF THE OLD PARTIES? ALL HAVE SEEN THE WRITING ON THE WALL. IT SHOULD BE A

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COMMON INTEREST TO PARTICIPATE. A CLEVER NEGOTIATOR COULD GRAB THIS CHANCE."

MODERATE SVENSKA DAGBLADET, IN AN EDITORIAL SUMMING UP THE SAD SITUATION, SUGGESTS THAT VENSTRE ECONOMIC EXPERT POUL NYBOE ANDERSEN MIGHT BE A GOOD CANDIDATE FOR PRIME MINISTER, WHILE SD NEWS SECTION SPECULATES ON POUL HARTLING FOR THE POST.

LIBERAL GOTTEBORGS POSTEN BELIEVES THAT EVEN IF BROAD
COALITION COULD BE ORGANIZED IT WOULD NOT BE LONG-LIVED.
"BUT SUCH A COALITION BETWEEN SOCDEM, RADICALE VENSTRE,
VENSTRE AND THE CONSERVATIVES, WITH HILMAR BAUNSGARD
AS PRIME MINISTER IS BEST THAT COULD HAPPEN TO DENMARK
TODAY", NEWSPAPER SAID. "AND SUCH A GOVERNMENT COULD THEN
ANNOUNCE NEW ELECTION WHEN VOTERS HAVE HAD ENOUGH OF
PROTESTS AND HAD TIME TO THINK THINGS OVER."
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